

"A Queen Chosen"

Esther 2

Part 2

Introduction: Last week in our study of Esther we looked at Esther 2:1 and in that verse, we considered how Xerxes had returned from a military defeat and when he came home his began to miss Queen Vashti.

Notice Esther 2:1

Last week we considered how the king would have most likely restored Vashti if it had not been that the decree was unalterable. In that we were able to see that God was working out the details far in advance in order to see that Esther would become the queen.

God also works out the details in our lives to bring about His will. Even the things which we consider to be insignificant are important to God. While we are busy dealing with the everyday affairs of life, our God is behind the scenes working out the details so that all things will work together for our good and God's glory.

This brings us to where we are this evening. So, Xerxes has remembered the beauty, the disobedience, and the decree against Vashti and his heart is heavy as he reflects back to the times when he could go to her for comfort. Standing by Xerxes are the very men who had advised him to remove Vashti and as they see his heaviness and his need of comfort which they cannot provide, they begin to fear that they will come under the wrath of the king. They need a plan, and they need a plan quickly.

Notice Esther 2:2-4

Here we find the plan which the king's men presented to him. The king could appoint officers to search out young virgins from all provinces and they could be brought to the king after being made presentable by a spa treatment, and the king could choose the one who pleased him to replace Vashti. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us there were as many as 400 women involved in this rather remarkable Persian beauty pageant!

Application:

Here we have in the middle of this pagan kingdom a beauty pageant based upon lust and desire. The king will choose the next queen based upon his own personal desire. She will not be chosen based upon character, personality, or faithfulness. It will all be about her looks. Here again we see that God allows sinful man to carry out his own personal desires and then God uses the events that transpire to bring about His will. We would look at the

beauty pageant and conclude that God would have no use for such an event. But God will use this event that will be brought about by the king and his men.

Let us learn that when it comes to His people God never sleeps. He is constantly working behind the scenes to bring about His plan.

Psalm 121:1-8

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

² *My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.*

³ *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*

⁴ *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

⁵ *The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.*

⁶ *The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.*

⁷ *The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.*

⁸ *The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*

We see this very Truth in the verses that follow.

Notice Esther 2:5-6

We need to look closely at the word "WHO" in verse 6 and determine who it refers to. At first glance it seems to refer to Mordecai but if he had been carried away with Jeconiah this would make him over 110 years old. The "WHO" most likely refers to Kish Mordecai's great-grandfather who was a Benjamite who was taken into captivity to Babylon. There were three exiles of the Jews. They were, 605, 597, 586BC. Jeconiah was taken in the second exile in 597BC.

Now, the question is, how did Mordecai end up in the palace in Shushan? We are not told of the chain of events that led him there, but we can be sure it was the hand of God again preparing for what was about to happen. I want to borrow the words of an unknown writer here:

*"Indeed, God is always behind the **SEEN!** May God's Spirit give us the eyes to see Him moving, the spiritual vision that Paul alluded to when he wrote that..."*

2 Corinthians 4:18

¹⁸ While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

"Are you seeing some temporal circumstance that is causing you great anxiety, disturbing your inner peace, making it difficult to rest in Jesus? May God use the truth of this little book of Esther to allow you to see the temporal with eternal vision, with eyes fixed ultimately on Jesus the Author and Perfector of our faith."

Notice Esther 2:7

Here we are introduced to one of the "stars" of the book, Esther. She is Mordecai's cousin, and she has been adopted by him because both of her parents had died. Here in this verse the writer wants to be sure we do not miss that Esther was an orphan and she was under the loving care of Mordecai. Here was a young girl who had been through some very deep heart ache. She had a broken past, and she was a stranger in a foreign land.

Application:

There is within all of this a very encouraging lesson for us. For those who have experienced brokenness and those who have a scared past to the point that you feel as though God can bring nothing good from it all, keep in mind Esther had a broken past. He will take this young lady and He will use her to deliver her people from the death sentence. Let us understand from this that God's power is not hindered because of human frailty or because of our inability. God's power is not hindered because of secular decisions and made by worldly people.

Genesis 21:1-5

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

² For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

³ And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

⁴ And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

⁵ And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Here is a perfect example of how God's power is not limited because of human ability. Abraham and Sarah were both far beyond the child bearing years.

Notice the words of Swindoll:

"God's hand is not so short that it cannot save, nor is His ear so heavy that He cannot hear. Whether you see Him or not, He is at work in your life this very moment. God specializes in turning the mundane into the meaningful. God not only moves in unusual ways, He also moves on uneventful days. He is just as involved in the mundane events as He is in the miraculous."

Notice Esther 2:8-9

The favor of Esther begins to show in these verses. The keeper of the maids prefers Esther, and he gives to her special treatment.

Application:

When God wants to place us in a situation to glorify Him, He can be sure that the doors will be opened for us. There will be no need to force our way through a closed door.

Nehemiah 2:1-8

And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

² Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

³ And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

⁴ Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

⁵ And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

⁶ And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

⁷ Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

⁸ And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Daniel 1:8-9

⁸ But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

⁹ Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

Notice Esther 2:10

Esther had been instructed by Mordecai that she was not to reveal to anyone that she was a Jew. This then raises a question, "Why did Mordecai insist that Esther hide her Jewish lineage?" The answer may be found in the book of Ezra.

Ezra 4:1-6

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

² Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

³ But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

⁴ Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,

⁵ And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

⁶ And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

Here we see that there was animosity toward the Jews from the time they returned to rebuild the Temple under Zerubbabel even unto the time of Ahasuerus who is the king in the book of Esther. Because Mordecai had connections in the palace there is a very good possibility that he knew this and so out of fear he has made the decision to hide the fact that he and Esther are Jews.

Application:

I think it is important to point out that in the book of Ezra and also here in Esther, that the Satanic influence instilled fear and discouragement in the hearts of God's people. In the days of Ezra, fear was used to slow the Temple reconstruction and here in Esther it is instilled to discourage and steal away inner peace and to silence the people who were called to be God's earthly representatives.

Here we are thousands of years later, and the enemy's tactics are no different. When we are active for God, we can be sure that the enemy will do his best to instill fear and discouragement in our lives. The only way to overcome this is by faith. It is by knowing the Word of God and then believing what the God's Word says.

Conclusion:

Ephesians 6:12-17

¹² *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

¹³ *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

¹⁴ *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

¹⁵ *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

¹⁶ *Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

¹⁷ *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*